



**DELHI UNIVERSITY
LIBRARY**

EMPIRE

By the same Author.

Oil Imperialism (*Allen & Unwin*, 1927).

The Soviets in World Affairs (*Cape*, 1930).

Stalin and Hitler (*Penguin Books*, 1940).

Men and Politics (*Cape*, 1941).

A Week with Gandhi (*Allen & Unwin*, 1943).

Why Recognise Russia? (*New York*, 1931).

Machines and Men in Russia (*New York*, 1932)

Soviet Journey (*New York*, 1935).

War in Spain (*New York*, 1937).

Dawn of Victory (*New York*, 1942).

Louis Fischer

EMPIRE

DENNIS DOBSON LTD,
29, GREAT QUEEN STREET, LONDON

~~First published in Great Britain~~
September 1945,

Printed in Great Britain by :
THE GRAYS INN PRESS,
42 Grays Inn Road, London, W.C.1.
(In 9 pt. Times Roman leaded)

IT will be very difficult to make a good and lasting peace. Wars do not normally generate the kind of feelings which conduce to satisfactory peace settlements. Yet, this time, despite the difficulties, real peace is possible.

A peace settlement is often regarded as a series of measures and penalties imposed by the victors on the vanquished enemy. That is the wrong way to try to make peace. Peace, like charity, begins at home.

The peace will be no better than the men who make it. Governments create peace in their own image. The better the peacemakers the better the peace.

This world is at war because it was sick. A peace settlement can be curative or punitive. It can combine unequal parts of both features. But one thing is certain: to have peace the world must cure its diseases. Having defeated the axis countries we should undertake the cure of their diseases. Meanwhile, the United Nations could start by curing themselves. That will provide us with the necessary experiences to cure others.

Solid, permanent peace is impossible unless the causes of war are eliminated. There are many causes of war. Empires are one of the chief causes.

Louis Fischer

If the problem of colonies is not solved, other wars will follow this one.

Over two billion human beings live on this planet. More than half of them live in Asia. Asia has doubled its population in the last fifty years. Asia is aroused. It wants liberty, security, prosperity, and dignity.

Asia has become conscious of its strength and its possibilities. It is tired of being regarded as "the white man's burden." This is why American leaders are warning the world that imperialism must go.

"The era of imperialism is ended," Mr. Sumner Welles declared at Arlington Cemetery on Memorial Day, 1942. Henry Wallace told an audience in New York on November 8, 1942, that "the new democracy, by definition, abhors imperialism." Mr. Wendell Willkie spoke out repeatedly against imperialism after his "One World" trip. They, and an increasing number of observers, realise that imperialism means war. Empires will be the great threat to peace after this war.

The first job of the peace planners is to plan a world without empires. Otherwise it will be a world without peace. Unless the post-war settlement solves the problem of colonies it will not be a realistic settlement. It will not be a fundamental settlement. It will not cure the evil of war. Peace planners who omit a consideration of empires are dealing in fantasies.

The primary purpose of an international organisation after this war must be to accelerate and supervise the progress of African and Asiatic colonies which are not yet ripe for independence and, secondly, to bring those colonies that are ready for self-rule into a world system for peace and prosperity. Peace planners who ignore these tasks will merely

E m p i r e

build a new international roof over the old foundations of a world that has gone to war too often.

Empires militate against peace. They also militate against economic progress and economic stability. Empires are too expensive. In 1812, Lord Castlereagh, British Foreign Secretary, said, "Great Britain has derived more commercial advantage from North America since the separation than she did when that country was . . . part of her colonial system." England gained by losing the thirteen colonies. She gained money and trade. She gained a friend who helped save her in 1917-1918 and stood by her in 1940-1943.

But "it's wonderful," as Benjamin Franklin remarked in 1785, "how preposterously the affairs of this world are managed." Nations rarely learn from past experiences. England is repeating in India the mistakes she made in America in the eighteenth century. In fact, one of the world's worst curses is the longevity of centuries. The eighteenth and nineteenth centuries have survived to plague us in the twentieth. Empires are obsolete. They are millstones around the necks of the imperial countries and deadweights on the colonies. In these circumstances, it is indeed "wonderful," by which Franklin meant strange, that empires are still maintained. This is the riddle of empire.

Empires are riddles. Sometimes their colonies are accidents. In the sixteenth century a Portuguese navigator sailed around Africa and up to Asia. He needed drinking water. So he stopped his ship at the tiny port of Macao on the China coast, near Hong Kong. Hence Macao has been a Portuguese colony for almost four hundred years.

It is an accident that India is British and not French. It is an accident that Greenland is Danish

Louis Fischer

and not Dutch. It is an accident that Java was Dutch and not British.

All existing empires are the children of chance and conquest. Empires are built on the physical might of one country and the physical weakness of its colonies. They are not built on right. What right has England to rule India? What right had Italy to rule Abyssinia between 1936 and 1940? What right has Japan to rule Manchuria or Burma? None.

The illegal, accidental nature of empires makes for world insecurity and instability. Peace at home and peace abroad can only be based on law. But imperialism is the negation of law. It is might without right.

One nation has acquired a colony by accident. Its rivals dream of accidents and incidents which will give it an empire. Rival imperialisms thus challenge one another. The result is war. The first world war had rotten roots in Africa. Some of the roots of this war grew in the rotten colonial soil of Asia and Africa.

Lest a colony break away from the mother country, the mother country keeps it weak. This weakness acts like a vacuum sucking toward it the jealous nation which wants an empire. The jealous country is also encouraged by the discontent within the colony. Empires normally generate colonial discontent. A colony, by definition, is a place where an outsider is master. The master usually boasts that he is bearing "the white man's burden." This assumption of white racial supremacy makes Western imperialism the blood brother, or perhaps the father, of fascism. The presence in one's own country of a foreigner who considers himself superior, and is in fact boss, nurtures the bitterness which ultimately flowers into servid nationalism. Imperialism, the

offspring of nationalism, thus breeds an opposing nationalism eager to serve as the grave digger of empires.

In India, for instance, the anti-British attitude is universal. The British Viceroy of India, Lord Linlithgow himself, admitted to me in the summer of 1942, that "India was never as anti-British as it is to-day." Sir Firoz Khan Noon, who sits on the Viceroy's executive council as Member for Defence, gave an interview to the Press on September 13, 1942. The report of this interview read: "Asked how many Indians supported the government of India, he answered, 'I should say, none.'"

A typical university student in New Delhi had finished a particularly violent diatribe against the British: I said to him, "Tell me, since you dislike the British so violently, would you want Japan to invade and conquer India?"

He hesitated and replied, "No, but we Indians pray that God may give the British enough strength to stand up under all the blows they deserve."

When I pinned him and other Indians down and demanded why, concretely, they objected to the British, the usual answer was that the British regarded Indians, and treated Indians, as inferiors. Nobody likes being treated as an inferior by an intruder whose claim to ascendancy rests on his strong right arm and the white colour of his skin.

The problem of empire is part of the world's colour question. Colour plays a role in this war. Hatred of the white man smoothed the path of Japan's military advances after Pearl Harbour. The colour problem is an ugly symptom of the diseases in our civilisation. Unless cured, this disease contains the germs of a third world war.

In one out of every three political conversations in India, the Indian I was talking to would mention

Louis Fischer

the Russo-Japanese war of 1904-1905. That seems a long way and a long time off. But Indians remember it as the first defeat administered by a coloured race to a white race. It gave a fillip to Indian nationalism. On my trip back to America from India, I stopped in Cairo and spoke to a gifted British diplomat with years of service in Persia. I told him of the effect on India of Japan's victory over Russia. He said it had exercised the same influence on Persia.

In this war, the prestige of Japan among the coloured races of the East mounted sky-high during Nippon's early victories over Britain, the United States, and Holland. Before the war is over, China will have emerged as a leading nation. China's new political links with India are strong, and Chiang Kai-shek intervened with President Roosevelt and Winston Churchill in an effort to achieve a modification and moderation of British policy in India. Japan cannot unite Asia. But Asia can unite.

A solid phalanx of white nations seeking to dominate Asia is sure to stimulate an opposing solidarity among the coloured races.

If America were to join Britain, Holland, and France as a great imperialist nation, the East would unite against the West. In that event, Soviet Russia, which is as much of the West as of the East, might side with the colonial peoples. A conflict between the mechanised giants of the West and the teeming millions of the East would make the second world war look like a kindergarten game.

America, whose imperial stakes in the East are negligible, can perform a great, lasting service to humanity by striking out for the freedom and equality of opportunity of Eastern nations. That is the biggest single move anybody can make to prevent the third world war.

E m p i r e

The white man can stay in the East as a friend.
He will invite a clash if he tries to stay as a master.

During my stay in India, I talked several times with Sir Archibald (now Lord) Wavell, then Commander-in-Chief of the British armed forces in India. Wavell said to me: "If, after Pearl Harbour, we had been capable of divesting ourselves of our psychological prejudices and political traditions, we should have abandoned the Philippines and the Dutch East Indies without fighting and concentrated all our men and materials in Burma, because if we had held Burma we could have moved from India, through Burma, into China for the final assault upon Japan."

Lord Louis Mountbatten's appointment, at the Quebec Conference, as Allied Commander-in-Chief in India and Ceylon confirms Wavell's analysis. Lord Louis will, in the words of Churchill, conduct "triphilian operations" from India into Burma. India, Burma, and China are our best stepping stones to Japan.

The strategy of defeating Japan by the island-to-island method would entail much time and high cost, for the Pacific islands are myriad. Russia may give the United Nations the Siberian bases from which to operate against Japan, or she may not. Even if she did, the road from India to China would remain indispensable to victory in Asia unless victory can be achieved through long-range air power alone. Air power, at this stage, not only saves lives; it saves political embarrassment. If airplanes could defeat Japan, the West could ignore the demands of China and India for equal influence and rights—ignore them temporarily.

For no matter how the war is won—whether with the aid of China and India or over their heads—

Louis Fischer

950 million Chinese and Indians cannot be so many forgotten little men after the war. They will not allow themselves to be forgotten.

In war as in peace, the first concern of Western governments should be the friendship and co-operation of the billion yellow and brown men of eastern Asia whose experience with the white race has not been too pleasant. The white man came for profit and stayed for profit and power. To-day, therefore, the Asiatics are sceptical about the purpose of this war. They doubt the words of Western statesmen. They look with suspicion on all great powers. They feel deserted and alone, the objects of politics, the pawns of power politics. They fear that the triumph of the United Nations in the present war will reinforce Western imperialisms in China, India, and the rest of Asia. That is why China is asking whether the British will cede Hong Kong and whether Japanese Formosa will be returned to China. Will Burma and India be free? China demands. If imperialism remains entrenched anywhere in Asia China's freedom may be incomplete.

Asia's attitude toward the war reflects its estimate of the white man's attitude toward Asia in the peace.

During the week I spent as the house guest of Mahatma Gandhi in the summer of 1942, I frequently urged upon him the necessity of intensifying the interest and participation of Indians in the war effort. One hot afternoon, as we sat on the earth in the Mahatma's tiny, mud-walled, bamboo-roofed hut, he said to me, "You want us Indians to fight for democracy in Germany, Italy, and Japan. How can we? We haven't got democracy ourselves. President Roosevelt." Gandhi continued, "talks about the Four Freedoms. Does that include the freedom to be free?"

I said, "After the war, the world will be better."

Gandhi looked me straight in the eye and said, "Are you sure?"

I said, "I hope."

Gandhi replied, "I want to see a change in the heart of England and of America now if I am to believe that they will be capable of building a better world after the war."

Gandhi was here posing the question which all Asia, and indeed millions of people in other continents, are asking: After victory, what?

Thus the problem of empire raises the whole problem of the post-war settlement. Asia, and most of Europe, knows one thing: what was is bad. Their past has been bloody, ugly, and undignified. This, in fact, is true for the entire human race if we paint an honest picture of the last thirty years and show it to include two major, costly world wars and much economic suffering and insecurity between wars.

If the leaders of the United Nations indicate to Asia and Europe that in victory we will bring them a future that resembles their past they will be disappointed. The key to a better future in peace is change away from the past.

The old, however, is very resistant, and the people who have benefited from it—they are a minority on this earth—cling to it, especially since the future is untried, uncharted, and frightening. The struggle for the peace, therefore, is a struggle against the defenders of the *status quo*, against the defenders of what was and what is.

Certain social, economic, and political conditions made the first world war in 1914. Those conditions underwent only very minor changes after 1918. They accordingly produced the war in 1939. Those same conditions will make a third world war unless they are altered.

Louis Fischer

Persons who think in two dimensions say Hitler, Mussolini, Franco, and the Japanese militarists made this war. That is correct. But the rest of the world made them. Hitler, brute and maniac though he be, was nevertheless the child of our civilisation. We made him. We made him by being what we are. We made him by not helping those whom he wished to supplant at home and by deserting those whom he attacked abroad in the shameful period of our appeasement of fascist dictators.

We defeated the Kaiser and got a Hitler. Following the defeat of Hitler we may get a worse Hitler unless we destroy the soil and the seed out of which Hitlers, Mussolinis, and militarists grow. This, therefore, is not merely a war against foreign Hitlers and foreign fascism. It is equally a war against the fifty-per-cent. Hitlers and the ten-per-cent. Hitlers and the two-per-cent. Hitlers who dwell in the midst of the democracies and who help to make wars.

The roots of fascism in Germany, Italy, Japan, Spain, and other countries were imperialism, racial discrimination, monopolistic economic forces, high tariffs, hatred of trade unions, a minority's fear of the civil and political rights of the majority, and ideas of national supremacy which pour over into aggression. These phenomena are not unknown in non-fascist countries. Their origin and growth do not seem to be peculiar to one race or continent or climate or decade. Fascism is a universal disease which might even attack the countries to-day engaged in fighting the fascist-militaristic nations. It would be a sad paradox if in fighting we succumbed to the things we are fighting.

Therefore, champions of freedom must not deny freedom to others. Enemies of Hitler must not indulge in racial persecution and white imperialism. If democracy is worth dying for it is worth practising

E m p i r e

even though that means equal opportunity for all, free education for those who want it and are unable to pay for it, social security, full employment, universal suffrage in unprejudiced elections, and membership in an international security organisation. These are the fundamentals we fight for. They lead to peace.

In January, 1918, President Woodrow Wilson outlined America's war aims in the Fourteen Points. They were chiefly geographical and political (restoration of Alsace-Lorraine to France, the establishment of an independent Poland, etc.) and, where they enunciated principles like self-determination, they were principles intended for application to others. The Fourteen Points became a programme for others.

To-day our war aims are the Four Freedoms: freedom of speech and expression, freedom of worship, freedom from want—which means security and prosperity, and freedom from fear—which means peace. This is not merely a programme for others. The Four Freedoms are benefits we all seek. This war was not about a map. Peace will not be created by lifting up one country and destroying a second and third, or by snatching a piece of territory away from one country and patching it on to its neighbour. This war was not about foreign geography: it was a war about things we want for ourselves. This was a social war. This was a war to remake the world.

Unless the peace settlement is seen as a task in economic reform, spiritual regeneration, self-education, political change, and international organisation it will fail. What is needed is a different and a better world.

This is admittedly a big order. But the alternative is another war. Nations are ready to make

Louis Fischer

endless bloody sacrifices to win a war. They send into battle millions of fine young men. Many thousands of them die and lie buried in foreign soil. Many thousands of others come back blind and maimed and broken. That is the sacrifice we make in a war. The sacrifice also includes great wealth and substance plus the nerves and effort of hundreds of millions of civilians. Scores of countries are ready to make this huge investment. Yet when peoples are told to pay a much smaller price for a good peace they hesitate and say, That is a big order. They say, What you want is very complicated. Billions for war, but how little we are ready to pay to prevent another war which will be much bloodier than this one!

The shortest road to World War III is the assumption that the problems of peace-making are complicated.

The problem of India, the earth's largest colony, is complicated, one hears. The problem of the abolition of colonies is complicated, one is told. They are no more complicated than the political reconstruction and economic rehabilitation of post-war Europe, no more complicated than the question of world trade and the probable commercial rivalry between erstwhile allies, no more complicated than the relations between Russia and the rest of the world. Problems are called complicated in proportion to the courage and the will to solve them. Without a daring approach to the issues of the peace there will be no peace.

The peace this time will not spring forth in a Versailles hothouse. The peace is already being written. It is being made every day. The Russo-Polish boundary conflict, the muddled, zigzagging Anglo-American policy toward the French, our unimaginative approach to Italy after Mussolini's

fall, the cold-shouldering of China, the rebuffs to India and the arrests of the Indian nationalist leaders—all these and many other acts constitute the emerging shape of the peace to come. In none of these areas is it possible to discern anything which would justify optimism about the post-war settlement. The West's ineptitude in dealing with India is thus merely one aspect of its poverty of imagination and courage in coping with the fundamental problems of the peace. The peace is not only being made every day; it is being lost every day—while we win the war every day. That explains why joy over victories on the battlefield is mingled with grief over the setbacks on the peace front.

There are those who said, "Let's get on with the war; why talk about the peace?" The answer is that politics cannot be confined in compartments of time. This war did not start on September 1, 1939, when Hitler invaded Poland. It started in 1931, when Japan invaded Manchuria, in 1935, when Mussolini attacked Abyssinia, in 1936, when Mussolini and Hitler intervened in Spain. Just as the war started during the peace, so the peace started during the war. Some persons did not know that the war had started during the peace and so they thought they were at peace and they thought they could stay out of the war. Many allowed themselves to believe that the peace would wait until after the armistice. But they may suddenly discover that the war-time arrangements with our allies and war-time decisions for the disposition of our enemies in fact are the peace. The peace treaty will be written now, after the war, but the peace was made during the war.

To prevent Pearl Harbour we should have concerned ourselves with Manchuria, Abyssinia, Spain and Czechoslovakia. To prevent World War III

Louis Fischer

we have to concern ourselves with India and other colonies, with China and with all global problems. "Peace is indivisible." Measures which placate China and gratify India will hasten victory and insure peace after victory.

According to the official British census of 1921, seven per cent. of the population of India was literate. Ten years later, in the last valid censorship, the figure had gone up, miraculously, from seven per cent. to eight per cent. Mr. Yeatts, the British chief census commissioner, told me in New Delhi that the 1941 census count for literacy had been invalidated because too many Indians lied and said they were literate in order to be eligible to vote. Subsequently, however, the India Office in London announced (*New York Herald Tribune*, August 21, 1943) that the test for literacy in India had been reduced and, whereas formerly one had to be able to read and write, it now sufficed to be able to read only. The India Office accordingly stated that "there was a 70 per cent. increase in literacy among the Indians on this basis in 1941 over 1931." Seventy per cent. of the eight per cent. in 1931 makes five and six-tenths per cent., so that even by this watered-down test, after the census commissioner had declared the count invalid, the total literacy in India is thirteen and six-tenths per cent. In explanation, the British contend that education in India is complicated.

In 1917, only twenty-seven per cent. of the population of Russia was literate. The Czarist regime had found that it was complicated to educate the poor peasant masses and the poor working classes in a backward, superstitious country with poor communications and little revenue. Perhaps, too, the Czar feared the wrath of depressed millions who acquired the weapon of culture. Under the Soviet

regime, literacy rose in twenty-three years from twenty-seven per cent. to ninety per cent. The Bolsheviks did not find the problem of illiteracy complicated. One of the historic purposes of the Bolshevik regime was to raise the country's cultural level.

Russia counts as many races and religions as India. While the Czars reigned, these peoples were constantly at one another's throats, and Russia was notorious for anti-Jewish pogroms and the autocratic oppression of Poles, Georgians, and other national minorities. Races feuded with neighbouring races. When the Bolsheviks came into office in 1917, they opened the Czar's archives and they found that in the Caucasus, for instance, the Czarist authorities one year armed the Tartars that they might slaughter the Armenians and the next year armed the Armenians that they might slaughter the Tartars on the ancient principle that if the Armenians and Tartars, the Ukrainians and Jews, the Poles and the Great Russians hated one another they would forget the Czar who persecuted all of them. By the simple device of granting the races of Russia a limited amount of political and cultural autonomy, by infusing the races with a sense of dignity, the Bolsheviks converted the antagonism among the races into the faith of each race in its own potentialities and destiny. This helped make Soviet Russia strong.

But nothing in the annals of British imperialism in India suggests that the foreigner has sought to bridge the gulfs between the religions and races of India. Many British statutes and laws in India and many of the deeds of the British in India point toward a deliberate policy of dividing the country. In those circumstances, unity is indeed a complicated affair. It probably cannot be achieved while the outside conqueror holds the reins of power. An

Louis Fischer

imperial government can divide a colony indefinitely; division then becomes an excuse for dependence.

Herbert L. Matthews, like others, reports (*New York Times*, August 8, 1943) that "there are great stretches of India where Gandhi has never been and where his name is virtually unknown." But this truth is no warrant for any broad conclusions about India's readiness for independence. Probably not one Russian in a hundred had heard of Lenin when the Soviet government was established. Wendell Willkie polled over twenty-two million votes for president in 1940. It seems safe to guess that not over a million of those voters knew his name a year before they cast their ballots for him. A leader has followers before his followers know he is alive. He answers their prayers. He fills a need for them.

Great men are like good sculpture, made of one piece. They live single-tracked lives. Lincoln was great; he lived for union. Lenin was great; he lived to raise Russia out of the feudal mire. Churchill is great because all his acts have been directed toward the preservation of Great Britain as a first-class power. In the same way, Gandhi is great because every deed he does, every thought he thinks is calculated to promote the one goal of his life—freedom for India. He does not represent all of India. He has many ideas that are rejected by many Indians. He is not the man to rule a free India; that function would remain for others; Gandhi is no prime minister or administrator. His life's task ends when India gains her independence.

Churchill's eloquence is so compelling because he is merely saying brilliantly what every plain British citizen says to his neighbour or wife every evening. A great man is a bigger and better edition of his followers who applaud him because he echoes their

views. Similarly Gandhi, when he speaks, speaks for all of India—even for those Indians who never heard of him—because he reflects the wish of all of India to be herself, to be alone, to be free.

India is as ripe for freedom as Russia was for revolution, as the United States of 1932 was for the New Deal. Revolutions are not made by revolutionists; they are prepared for the revolutionists by their predecessors. The Czar made the Bolshevik revolution. Hoover made the New Deal. The British made Gandhi. The Czar was removed by force; Hoover was removed by democratic elections. The British in India hang on although history is finished with them.

The question in India is not whether the Indians are ripe for independence; the question is whether the British are ripe for Indian independence. India is being held not for the good of India but because certain Britons think India is good for them—in other words, because certain Britons think they need the *status quo*.

The defenders of the *status quo* always object that an alteration of the *status quo* is too complicated. All the problems of India, of empire, and of the peace settlement are thus of the same cloth, for the solution of each and all of them depends on the defeat of the champions of what is. The reactionaries who killed Loyalist Spain, who fawned on Hitler and Mussolini, who appeased fascism are not likely to set India free if they can help it.

On July 4, 1942, I attended a party given by Lord Linlithgow, the British Viceroy, in his great marble palace in New Delhi to celebrate America's independence from the British Empire. At that party I heard all the arguments against India's independence from the British Empire. A British

Louis Fischer

general said to me, "But could a free India defend itself?"

"Can a free England?" I replied.

What nation nowadays can defend itself single-handed? Not England or France or Italy or Russia. If only those countries are to be free which can defend themselves without outside aid, there will be very few, if any, free countries, so that the general's question should have been whether, after the war, an international organisation will be set up which will defend free India and free France and free America and free England and free Russia and all free countries against all aggressors.

The mounting destructive power of armaments will make the future freedom of all of us more and more dependent on measures of international security. In the air age, national independence becomes nearly synonymous with international collaboration for peace.

At the same party, I was asked to sit down with Lady Linlithgow, the wife of the Viceroy. The handsome, regal lady tried first to talk about the weather, which is a ubiquitous subject of conversation in sizzling India, but we soon switched to politics, and she said, "But are the Indians capable of ruling themselves?"

"That is exactly what the British Tories thought about the thirteen American colonies in 1776," I replied. Indeed, some American Tories sided with the British Tories, while in England certain elements who were opposed to George III's personal government at home sympathised with the rebellious Americans for they foresaw what actually happened: that the defeat of the empire in North America would make the British government more democratic. The British and Indian situations are similarly intertwined today. The loss of empire would rob a class

of British aristocrats and plutocrats of their social position and economic power.

I did not say to Lady Linlithgow, but I might have, that sometimes when one looks at the mess which the so-called civilised nations have made of this earth one wonders whether it might not be advisable to give the so-called uncivilised nations like China and India a larger part in managing the world. When Asia and Africa observe the recent handiwork of the white man and see that it includes their own poverty and oppression as well as two world wars they do not arrive at the same high opinion of the white man that the white man has of himself. We are wonderful at producing perfect frigidaires, automobiles, and bombs; but we have run ourselves into two wars in one generation and that is no proof to the brown or yellow man of our capacity to direct world affairs. In any case, the Asiatic, taking the Four Freedoms seriously, wants to be free. Either we take our war aims seriously or the Asiatic cannot take the war too seriously.

Nobody is born with the capacity to use freedom. The use of freedom is learned in the exercise of freedom.

At the same Fourth of July party I heard the final objection to Indian Independence: the friction between the Hindus, who number 255,000,000 and constitute sixty-five per cent. of the total population, and the Moslems, who number 94,000,000 and constitute twenty-four per cent. of the population. There are the bearded explanations of this friction: that Hindus worship the cow while Moslems eat it, that Hindus offend Moslems outside mosques and Moslems offend Hindus outside temples. Yet the Viceroy and many of his high officials as well as all Hindu and Moslem leaders informed me that

Louis Fischer

there was practically no trouble between Hindus and Moslems in the villages of India—and villages are ninety per cent. of India.

Mr. Mohammed Ali Jinnah, the president of the Moslem League, told me that seventy-five per cent. of all India's Moslems are former Hindus converted to Islam by the Mohammedan conquerors who arrived centuries ago from the west. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, prince among men, leader of the Indian Nationalist Congress party, put that figure at ninety-five per cent. instead of seventy-five per cent. and added that Jinnah is himself of Hindu ancestry and that Jinnah is a Hindu name.

India is much more of a nation than Soviet Russia or Switzerland, for instance. Hindus and Moslems are of the same race. Bengali Moslems look like Bengali Hindus and speak the same language. Very nearly fifty per cent. of the inhabitants of India speak one of two very similar languages (Urdu and Hindi). If India had a system of compulsory education, these two languages would soon be predominant. The racial origins of the inhabitants of India are less varied than the racial origins of the inhabitants of the United States.

President Manuel Quezon of the Philippines, drawing a parallel between his native land and India, has talked to me on several occasions about the early attempts of American administrators to divide Philippine Christians from the Moros who are Moslems. Later the attempt was abandoned as foolish and not conducive to that independence which was America's ultimate goal for the Philippines.

It would be wrong, of course, to underestimate religious differences in a country so religious as India. Yet both Islam and Hinduism are tolerant religions. Despite the reputation which the "Koran

or the Sword " slogan gave Moslems, Mohammedanism is tolerant toward "the people of the Book," toward the Jews and Christians who believe in the Bible. It is equally tolerant toward other faiths.

Hinduism is even more tolerant. Hinduism is a sponge religion. It includes features of Buddhism, Christianity, and paganism. It destroys no dogma; it absorbs all. There is no Hindu fundamentalism; all its fundamentals are in a constant state of flux, which means they are not fundamentals. Hindus have idols to which they pray. But when I asked Hindus who pray and dance before their idols whether they really believed in them they replied that they believe in one God. Hinduism is broad enough to embrace agnosticism, monotheism, and idolatry. Nehru said to me once, "If the Niagara Falls were in India they would be a god." They would be regarded as manifestations of God, and the idol of Niagara would be a children's toy as well as a divinity.

Gandhi, who is very Hindu, knows the Koran and believes in many tenets of Islam. In Gandhi's simple mud hut there is only one decoration, a black and white print of Jesus Christ under which is written, "He Is Our Peace." I asked Gandhi about the picture. He said, "I am a follower of Jesus."

Hinduism and Islam are different but not hostile, and the people who practice them have, in fact, lived together peacefully for centuries and would for all time if politics did not artificially divide them.

The greatest Moslem proponent of Hindu-Moslem unity is Dr. Abul Kalam Azad. He is president of the Indian Nationalist Congress, the Gandhi-inspired independence organisation. Azad was born in Mecca, is the author of a commentary on the Koran which has been accepted as authoritative by the entire Moslem world, and is regarded in

Louis Fischer

India as the finest living Mohammedan scholar. Dr. Azad combines the fighting spirit of a modern Indian with a love for ancient religious lore and a deep passion for music. He is one of India's best orators. Azad conducted most of the negotiations with Sir Stafford Cripps.

I met many Moslem intellectuals in India who are disciples of Azad and have, at the same time, a high regard for Jawaharlal Nehru. Nehru, the idol of Hindu youth, has a strong following among the new generation of Moslems. Young Moslem officers in the British army in India and Hindu and Moslem university students told me that the religious segregation practised by older folks breaks down where youth predominates. In the barracks and in a growing number of schools, Hindus, Moslems, and Untouchables eat together, work together, and go out together. Those who want freedom, internal peace, and economic progress in India are trying to bring the communities closer to one another. But those who stand to gain from the divisions feed the divisions.

In Soviet Russia, the population ranges from races like the Great Russian and White Russian, who are as European as a Swede or German, to the Buryat, who is Mongol, and the Tadjik, who is like a Hindu. Yet all those races united to fight the Nazis. In the United States, on the other hand, white men fought white men in a four-year civil war.

China, Russia, England, Germany, France, and Italy have also had their civil wars. There is no proof that India will have a civil war; there is only loose talk about the possibility. The Hindu-Moslem difference need not cause a clash if outside elements do not exacerbate it for sinister reasons and if each province or section of India enjoys religious and racial autonomy within a federation. That is the

solution favoured by many outstanding Hindus, Moslems, and Britons. That is the solution for India as it was for the United States. There could be no United States if the states did not have a separate existence; but there would be no United States if the states had a completely separate existence.

It is easy to create an impression of disunity. It is easy to say that in India there are Hindus and Moslems, British India and native states, Brahmins and non-Brahmins, Hindus and Untouchables, a hundred tongues and scores of nationalities. It is easy to stress what divides and to forget what unites. I could paint a similar picture of American disunity, of white against Negroes, of Catholics against Protestants against Jews, of Labour against Capital, of C.I.O. against A.F.L., of the New Deal against economic royalists, of North against South, of rich against poor, of Park Avenue against the slums. A foreigner looking at this picture might have visions of America flying apart, about to fall to pieces. This is just the kind of false picture which Goebbels and other fascist propagandists have taken pleasure in presenting.

There are divisions in India as there are in all countries. The divisions can be deepened by political manœuvres and social bribes. Anyone who engages in such divisive activity is playing with fire, sinning against peace after this war, and demonstrating that he opposes the liquidation of empire.

In Burma there is no Hindu-Moslem problem and no Gandhi. Yet the British refused Burma independence. China is racially homogeneous. Yet the Western powers treated her like a colonia¹, fourth-class nation. The manifestations of imperialism are neither logical nor ethical. They are based on power, not on principle. Subsequent attempts to

Louis Fischer

reconcile acts of violence with morality are not impressive.

Another division frequently emphasised by British spokesmen is that between British India and the native states. There are over five hundred territories in India ruled by maharajahs or hereditary princes. These territories, scattered throughout the peninsula and ranging from estates inhabited by two or three thousand people to vast provinces like Hyderabad with seventeen million inhabitants, embrace approximately one-fourth the population of all India. The British rule British India directly; they rule the native states through the princes, who are usually allowed full sway unless they interfere with British interests.

"I am an autocrat," the Maharajah of Bikaner said to me in Bombay on June 21, 1942. At that time he was president of the Indian Chamber of Princes. He has since died of cancer of the throat. He was a splendid Hindu warrior type, broad-shouldered and over six feet tall with thick, curled black-grey moustache, extremely bushy black eyebrows, a fine crop of dense white hair covering his leonine head, and long black hair growing back horizontally from the lobes of his ears. He spoke perfect English.

The maharajah showed me the treaty which his ancestor, Soorut Singh, signed with the British government on March 9, 1818. This document made the maharajah an autocrat in relation to his million subjects, and he owned almost everything in the state of Bikaner. But his relation to the British was described by the treaty as one of "subordinate co-operation." In return for this subordination, "the British government engages to protect the principality and territory of Bikaner." The British empire keeps the autocrat on his throne.

All these princely enclaves in India are strongholds of medievalism. When the Maharajah of Indore tried to assert himself and give his state a liberal constitution he soon found himself in California.

The British are not unmindful of the valuable contribution which the princes make to British domination of India. Thus, Professor Rushbrook Williams, a brilliant Englishman who has often served as official contact man with the maharajahs, wrote in the *London Evening Standard* of May 28, 1930, "The situations of these feudatory states, checkerboarding all India as they do, are a great safeguard. It is like establishing a vast network of friendly fortresses in debatable territory. It would be difficult for a general rebellion against the British to sweep India because of this network of powerful, loyal native states." The more autocratic the states the less chance discontented nationalist elements have of reducing these fortresses from within the walls.

The profound political reason for the existence of the native states was explained with startling frankness by Lord Canning, a British Viceroy, on April 30, 1860. "It was long ago said by Sir John Malcolm," Canning wrote, "that if we made all India into Zillahs (or British districts) it was not in the nature of things that our Empire should last fifty years; but that if we could keep up a number of Native States without political power, but as royal instruments, we should exist in India as long as our naval supremacy was maintained. Of the substantial truth of this opinion I have no doubt; and the recent events have made it more deserving of our attention than ever."

The native states of India are one of the shrewdest devices of imperialism.

In India, I read the text of scores of treaties be-

Louis Fischer

tween the British and the maharajahs. All these treaties were forced on the princes by the British to the advantage of the British. Usually, the treaties were negotiated after the prince had been defeated in war many decades ago. Now the British contend that they cannot leave India because they are pledged to protect the princes.

The princes appreciate the support of the British. They know that without the British government, their thrones, wealth, pomp, and pageantry will be in danger. But many of the more progressive princes realise that a new wind is blowing in India and indeed throughout Asia. Some of the princes maintain discreet contacts with leaders of the Indian Congress party. An administrative official of the Chamber of Princes said to me in New Delhi, "The princes will not be the Ulster of India." They will not, in other words, try to divide India.

But the princes are there and they are reluctant to give up their privileges. Even though not a few of them are anti-British, they want the British to remain. If the British must go, however, the princes will attempt to accommodate themselves to the new India.

Gandhi said to me that if a provisional Indian nationalist government were established it would be a coalition consisting of representatives of the Hindus, Moslems, and princes. When I reported this to the Maharajah of Bikaner, he said, "We would expect the same protection from such a government as we now receive from the British." And, at least in the first stage of independence, a free Indian government would scarcely be in a position to abolish the native states. Their disappearance can only be part of the gradual process of lifting India out of her present backwardness and poverty. But, obviously, the sixteenth century

cannot go on living forever. It is already clashing with the twentieth.

The end of imperialism will accelerate progress in the colonies and throughout the world. The struggle for Indian independence is really a struggle to allow India to live in the present. The obstacles are numerous. The past has guns and money. The opponents of Indian independence, however, do not speak of these obstacles as something to be eliminated. They use them as arguments for not granting independence. The arguments are as old as imperialism, as old as the conqueror's superiority complex.

No one has heard a British spokesman give the reasons why India should have freedom. But innumerable official Englishmen have tried to explain why India should not have freedom. That is why India does not believe that she will get her independence from the present rulers of Britain. That is why India has no faith in British offers.

On October 6, 1943, President Roosevelt sent a message to Congress urging the early grant of independence to the Philippines: "We have kept every promise which the United States has made to the Filipino people . . . I am sure that the American people believe that the Filipino people have earned the right juridically to be free and independent." Where is there a statement on India in recent years by Churchill or Halifax or Eden or Amery or Linlithgow to match the President's words. The Philippines, to be sure, are not India. There are no analogies in life and there is no complete analogy between the Philippines and India. But morally the issue is the same.

"It's marvellous," President Quezon of the Philippines said when he read the President's mes-

Louis Fischer

sage. But not one Indian said "It's marvellous" about the Cripps offer.

British manoeuvres during the war to try to convince the outside world that all is well with India are strange, to say the least. Sir Stafford Cripps went to India in March, 1942, and on behalf of the British government offered independence; that would have liquidated the empire. But Churchill said on November 10, 1942, "We mean to hold our own." And he added, "I have not become the King's First Minister in order to preside at the liquidation of the British Empire." Thereupon Churchill's subordinates, embarrassed by his clarifying bluntness, try to liquidate the empire by using a magic word, "commonwealth." Now it is true that Canada, New Zealand, Australia, and South Africa are free white dominions—daughters of the mother country. But India is a poor, oppressed colony, and calling the empire a commonwealth changes no spots in India.

This war has demonstrated the remarkable cohesion between England and her white dominions. But it has also illuminated the chasm between England and India where the Nationalist Congress Party as well as the Moslem League openly and officially refuse to support the war effort and where the people ask for bread and freedom before they accept the war as their own. About two million Indians have found bread by getting into uniform. The officer in charge of the British Army in India said to me, "Indians enlist for money and honour." They enlist to eat and because it is in the tradition of many families to serve as warriors. But the number of Indian recruits is no measure of the popularity of British rule in India. Britain could have fifty million hungry Indians for the army if it was ready to feed and clothe them. The Indian nation, however, is

not co-operating with the British in this war. It will not fight for the empire. It will only fight for freedom. The British government knew this in advance, for whereas the dominions voted on whether they would go to war, India was never consulted and was declared to be at war against its will. That certainly does not prove that India enjoys democracy or self-government within the Commonwealth. Indians, moreover, do not believe the British intend to give them self-government.

Cripps offered India independence; Churchill refuses to grant it. Cripps' proposal would have divided India because it recognised the principle of Pakistan, or a separate state for Moslems. Then British spokesmen say that India cannot have independence because it is not a united nation. But Mr. Leopold Amery, British Secretary of State for India, says India is one nation. In a very important declaration before the House of Commons on August 16, 1940, Amery declared that "India is a self-contained and distinctive region of the world. There is the fact that India can boast of an ancient civilisation and of a long history common to all its peoples, of which all Indians are equally proud. Is there any Indian who is not proud of being an Indian?"

So which is it? Are we to believe Amery who says India is a "unity" or other officials who maintain that India is divided? If Amery's dictum of unity is correct, why did the British adopt the principle of Pakistan to divide India?

Many Moslems object to Pakistan. Mr. Fazlul Huq, the Moslem Prime Minister of the Moslem province of Bengal, which, presumably, would enter into this separate Moslem state, told me that he was opposed to Pakistan. Mr. Allah Baksh, then Prime Minister of the Moslem province of Sind, told me

Louis Fischer

the same thing. Other Moslems oppose Pakistan and more would oppose it if the British did not encourage it. The Hindus unanimously object to the vivisection of India and the breaking up of India which is geographically and racially a unit. The Cripps' proposal sowed new discord inside India.

Cripps gave India a paper proposal of post-war independence with one hand and, with the other, by recognising the right of secession of any province that disliked the Indian Union's constitution, he obstructed India's independence. The Cripps mission combined a gesture of freedom with a blow for continued Indian servitude.

The failure of the Cripps mission was a shock to India, and Cripps, perhaps undeservedly, became a hated name. Cripps had been sent out to New Delhi to repair the damage caused by the British military reverses in the Pacific (Hong Kong, Malay, Singapore, and the sinking of the "Prince of Wales" and the "Repulse") early in 1942. He was rushed to India at least partly because President Roosevelt prodded the British government to do something to improve conditions in India. For the Japanese victories had caused panic in India. The Indians lost their confidence in the ability of the British Navy and other British forces to defend India.

When Cripps failed, conditions of course grew worse. There was a general feeling among Indian leaders, supported by data in their hands and in the hands of official foreign observers, that Cripps had tried honestly to reach a settlement but found his efforts sabotaged by reactionary imperialists who did not want him to succeed. They did not want him to succeed because success might have made India free and Cripps Prime Minister of Britain. Cripps' subsequent eclipse in British politics certainly has brought joy to the hearts of the reactionaries.

The Cripps proposals offered nothing during the war and hopes surrounded by reservations for after the war. Yet even this was apparently too much for the die-hards.

In desperation over Cripps' failure and with characteristic spontaneity, Gandhi thereupon exclaimed, "The British must go." He meant: go immediately. Gandhi often is uninhibited in speech; sometimes indeed he speaks first and thinks later, and sometimes when he discovers that he has spoken badly he admits it in public. Before many weeks, for instance, he abandoned his "British Must Go" slogan. "I cannot ask the British to leave India during the war," he said to me and said subsequently many times in writing. "That would mean making a present of India to the Axis."

Neither Gandhi nor any Indian leader is asking the British to get out of India while the war is on. Neither Gandhi nor any Indian expects Indian independence during the war. All that Gandhi and the Indian nationalists ask is an Indian nationalist government which, as Gandhi put it to me, "would not interfere with military operations, but which would forthwith sign a treaty of alliance with the United Nations to help win the anti-Axis war." Gandhi published this statement. He wanted to make it personally to the Viceroy and requested an interview. The Viceroy refused to see him.

Pacifist Gandhi would not fight a war. But he knows that Nehru, Dr. Azad, the President of the Indian Nationalist Congress party, C. Rajagopalachari, and other nationalist leaders are militants. Nehru declared at a giant open-air meeting in Bombay which I attended, "I would fight Japan sword in hand." Then he added, "But I can only do so as a free man."

These words bear a striking similarity to the state-

Louis Fischer

ment of President Manuel Quezon of the Philippines in the *New York Herald Tribune* of September 30, 1943. Quezon said, "I would care little about Japan's defeat if my own Philippines were not going to be free." The Indians are behaving like all Asiatic peoples that value their freedom and will fight for it. In fact, they are behaving like all peoples that value their freedom. British recognition of this fundamental issue would pave the way to friendly collaboration with the Indian nation.

In that fateful summer of 1942, the British government could have had an agreement with India by setting up an Indian national government with limited prerogatives and making a guaranteed, unreserved pledge of independence after the war. Gandhi and Nehru were eager for a compromise. But London took the opportunity to crush the nationalist movement.

In 1935, Winston Churchill asserted that "Gandhism and all it stands for will sooner or later have to be grappled with and finally crushed." The present is Churchill's first opportunity in high office to do that. Gandhism stands for India's independence. Churchill is grappling with it.

The question, accordingly, is not whether Indians could implement independence; they would. The question is whether the British are ready to make India independent. India is England's "own." India's problem is viewed by the British not from the angle of India's interest but from the aspect of the liquidation of Britain's empire.

Lord Lytton, writing in *Free World* magazine of August, 1943, states that "In the (Indian) provinces, where the people are more or less homogeneous, complete self-government has already been established." This is demonstrably untrue. Every Indian province has a British governor who is master and

who can remove the Indian provincial government. In October, 1942, for instance, the British governor of Sind removed Mr. Allah Baksh, Moslem Prime Minister who enjoyed the backing of a majority in the Sind legislature, because Allah Baksh had protested against Churchill's statements on India and returned his titles to the British government. The official communique stated that the governor, Sir Hugh Dow, "has no option but to inform Mr. Allah Baksh that he no longer possesses his confidence and that he cannot in consequence continue to hold office." So the British governor's confidence weighs more than the legislature's confidence.

On March 29, 1943, Mr. Fazlul Huq, the Moslem Prime Minister of the province of Bengal, was asked by Sir John Herbert, British governor of the province, to resign. Huq resigned. In July, 1943, Mr. Huq read to the Bengal Legislature a correspondence that had passed between him, while he was still in office, and the Governor. Huq made serious charges: "You are acting as if your ministers did not exist. . . . I have detected your personal interference in almost every matter of administrative detail. . . . A little reflection will convince you how unwelcome must be such interference and how bitterly ministers must resent impediments in the way of the exercise of the very limited powers they possess under the Act of 1935 by which India is governed." "It is wholly unconstitutional," Mr. Huq wrote of the British governor's behaviour, and added, "You should allow provincial autonomy to function honestly rather than as a cloak for the exercise of autocratic powers."

An elected Indian prime minister had to yield to a British governor appointed by the British government.

It is significant that British governors thus removed

Louis Fischer

two Indian Moslem provincial prime ministers who believed in collaboration with Hindus, had formed coalitions with Hindu parties, were opposed to Pakistan, and were antagonistic to Jinnah's Moslem League.

Clearly, therefore, the British have granted the Indian provinces the form of self-government and a little content, but not Lord Lytton's imaginary "complete self-government." As to the whole of India—not the provinces—even the form is lacking.

Yet it is officially admitted that India is capable of governing herself. Speaking in the House of Commons on October 26, 1939, Sir Stafford Cripps said, "On the basis of right and justice and principle I should have thought nobody could have denied that India to-day is fully entitled to self-government. What answer have we to give now to that demand, admitting, as the Governor-General (Viceroy) fully admits, the competence of the Indians to govern themselves, unless it be that our selfish desire to continue the exploitation of India as part of our imperial monopoly is to override our conceptions of right and justice?"

Nevertheless, nothing which the British have done in India in recent years would indicate that they are getting out of India. The vigorous British effort to crush the Indian Nationalist Congress and to build up the Moslem League suggests, on the contrary, that the British are not ready to liquidate the empire.

The Cripps proposal reinforced the Indian view that Britain will not part with power. The proposal gave Indians nothing for the duration. After the war, India could become a dominion by adopting a constitution. But the princes would appoint at least one-fourth of the members of the constitutional convention. Nationalists felt that this large block

of votes could be used to obstruct the drafting of the constitution. For if the princes rejected the constitution they could withdraw from the Indian Union and maintain their separate states under the protection of British arms. The Moslems, too, could bolt the convention and set up states unconnected with the rest of India. These provisions, it seemed, nullified the offer of national independence.

Sir Stafford Cripps officially informed Indians that, if they accepted his proposal and became a British dominion after the war, the first step of the Indian dominion could be secession from the British empire. But subsequently, on May 6, 1943, Leopold S. Amery, the British Secretary of State for India, told an audience of American ladies who had come for tea at the American Outpost in London that, though India might become independent after the war, there would still be a "period before she could afford to stand alone," and during that period, therefore, she ought to remain inside the "British Commonwealth."

In regard to India, some Englishmen won't say No, and won't say Yes. Cripps speaks of immediate dominion status and Amery speaks of delayed dominion status for India. But Churchill sweeps both away. Churchill said on January 30, 1935, "Except as an ultimate visionary goal, Dominion status, like that of Canada or Australia, is not going to happen to India in any period which we can remotely foresee." Churchill will not liquidate the empire.

It is easy to see why, in these circumstances, most politically minded Indians doubt the intention of the British government to make India free, and why the frustration and bitterness in India have continued to mount. Yet India is important not only to Britain but to all the United Nations. "In large measure," as the *New York Herald Tribune* wrote on June 9,

L o u i s F i s c h e r

1943, "the success of the ultimate great offensive to crush Japanese military power will rest upon the manner in which the Viceroy of India maintains tranquility within his jurisdiction and secures the co-operation of the Indian people for positive action."

Surface tranquility can be achieved by physical force. The co-operation of the people can only be won through the application of political wisdom.

British policy in India is naturally subjected to severe criticism by British and other friends of freedom, decency, and humanity. In normal times, the officials try to defend themselves. In war-time, they shriek back, "Fifth columnist." Mr. Brendan Bracken, then the British Minister of Information, said when he was in New York after the Quebec Conference of August, 1943, that some of these critics "are doing a great disservice to the United Nations." A war makes this sort of defence against criticism very convenient, but not more convincing. Surely, when hundreds of millions of people in Asia and throughout the world are watching the battle for freedom in India, it is no service to the cause of the United Nations to arrest Gandhi, Nehru, and other leaders of the Indian freedom movement and keep them in jail for several years without trial. Surely it is no service to the cause of the United Nations to shoot and flog Indian demonstrators for freedom. When it was announced in the House of Commons that airplanes had machine-gunned Indian villages from the air, Tory Members of Parliament applauded. The world heard both the shots and the applause. Was that a service to the United Nations? Months after Gandhi and thousands of his followers had been imprisoned, Sir Maurice Gwyer, a great Englishman who is Chief

Justice of the Indian Supreme Court, ruled in a published decision that the Indian nationalists had been arrested illegally under a statute that had no validity. What did the British Viceroy do? Did he release them? No. On April 28, 1943, he autocratically issued a new ordinance validating the arrests of August, 1942. Is such procedure in the midst of a war for democracy a service to the cause of the United Nations?

More power to Churchill's honesty, therefore. He does not stoop to facile demagogic charges. He does not charge friends of Indian freedom with sympathy for Goebbels. He is not anti-Gandhi because Gandhi is allegedly pro-Japanese. He is anti-Gandhi because of what Gandhi stood for in 1935 and what Gandhi always stood for: India's independence from the British empire.

The charge that Gandhi is pro-Japanese is a canard for the digestion of the gullible and a lie which sticks in the throats of those who speak it. Chiang Kai-shek, the Chinese leader, would not have intervened on behalf of Gandhi if the Mahatma were pro-Japanese. If Gandhi were pro-anything he would be pro-British and pro-American because he is steeped in the literature of freedom of the Anglo-Saxon democracies. Actually, however, he is only pro-Indian, much too pro-Indian for my taste. During the week I spent as his house guest, Gandhi never listened to the radio (there was no radio in his village) and only occasionally looked at the headlines of newspapers. His interests are limited to India. Those who suffer from the denial of nationhood become excessively nationalistic, and I found many Indian nationalists very introspective and India-centred. They wanted independence; little else mattered to them. Jawaharlal Nehru is the brilliant exception, and his following, especially among the

Louis Fischer

younger generation, is large. He is a man of the world, an internationalist, a proved and active anti-fascist who yearns for a better India within a better world and knows that he will not have the one without the other. Gandhi's goal is Indian freedom. Nehru's reaches beyond. Gandhi, the deeply religious Hindu, the profound pacifist, abhors the Japanese state for its militarism, its terror, its atrocities, its worship of the warrior. To say that Gandhi is pro-Japanese is like saying that Churchill is pro-Nazi. If Churchill were in prison and could not reply, some fools might believe the charge if it were repeated often enough by prominent persons with access to the channels of propaganda.

Deeply anti-imperialistic by the logic of his whole political life, Gandhi could no more be pro-Japanese than Chiang Kai-shek who has warned the West that "unless real world co-operation replaces both isolationism and imperialism . . . there will be no lasting security for you or for us." On the other hand, Mr. Leopold S. Amery, the British Secretary of State for India, defended Japan's invasion of Manchuria—and for a very interesting reason. "Who is there among us," he exclaimed in the House of Commons on February 27, 1933, "to cast the first stone and to say that Japan ought not to have acted with the object of creating peace and order in Manchuria and defending herself against the continual aggression of vigorous Chinese nationalism? Our whole policy in India, our whole policy in Egypt, stands condemned if we condemn Japan."

This parallel between Japan's suppression of "vigorous Chinese nationalism" and England's attitude toward vigorous Indian nationalism and vigorous Egyptian nationalism reveals the thinking of the British imperialist who, to be true to himself

and his own role in the East, appeased Japan until Japanese imperialism clashed with his imperialism to produce this second world war. Thus aggressive imperialism as well as conservative, defensive imperialism makes its contributions to international conflict. The blood of our dead and wounded fighting men condemns both these evils.

There are American troops and American airmen in India. There are Chinese troops in India. India will be our base against Japan, and if the base does not co-operate the war may be prolonged, and Americans, Chinese, Frenchmen and others as well as Britons will pay. That is why India is America's business, China's business, world business. As H. N. Brailsford, the brilliant British publicist, says, "I believe that India is the concern not merely of Britain but of all the United Nations, and that America with China may have a part to play in shaping its future." What happens in India will help mould the shape of the peace, may indeed ruin the peace. That is why President Roosevelt, Chiang Kai-shek, Cordell Hull, Sumner Welles, Henry Wallace, President Quezon, Wendell Willkie, and Louis Johnson and William Phillips whom the President sent to India as his personal envoys, have been deeply concerned with the state of affairs in India. That is why those who understand what the war has been about and how easily the peace may be endangered, have been critical of British policy in India.

The British have demonstrated their tremendous courage during this war. They can take it. They should be able to take criticism. They always had that capacity. It was always part of the civilisation of the British that they could see their own faults and tolerate their critics. Certain continental nations have often lacked this virtue. One hopes the British will not lose it. We are fighting this war, in part,

Louis Fischer

in order to retain the right to criticise. In a dictatorship one does not criticise the government, or, rather, one does not criticise it twice. Englishmen like Brailsford, Aneurin Bevan, Member of the House of Commons, Lord Strabolgi, Harold J. Laski, and others who condemn British policy in India do not thereby become anti-British. Neither does an American. I am not anti-British. I am anti-Tory and anti-imperialist. I would not become anti-American by criticising the Roosevelt Administration. My criticism would only reflect my desire to see the war prosecuted with greater effectiveness. British policy in India handicaps the war effort. It makes many people throughout the world doubt United Nations declarations on war aims. It undermines the faith of Indians and innumerable non-Indians in the benefits that should flow from this bloody conflict.

Churchill's refusal to liquidate the empire at least has the virtue of directness. He wants to beat the Axis and keep India. He sees no contradiction. That is a point of view. There may be other points of view.

In India, I met many Englishmen who were sincere, hard-working servants of their country and deeply convinced of the good they had done to India in the long years of their work under trying conditions. Few of them are great but all are loyal. The Viceroy himself toiled many hours for many years at a thankless task and it must have been painful for him to leave India in the midst of famine and widespread discontent. I was impressed when Sir Gilbert Laithwait, the Viceroy's Private Secretary, and Major General Molesworth, first assistant to Wavell, bicycled to and from work under the hot Indian sun in order to save gasoline though they had the cars and the gasoline and the drivers. India

E m p i r e

has been governed by generations of honest British officials who did what they could within the limits set by British policies and British imperial interests. They had less co-operation from Indians than they deserved, but as much as they could expect, for the Indian hesitates to stand by the foreign ruler. If India is to be ruled by any outside country she is probably best off under the British. My criticism is aimed not at individual administrators or at a nation, for I do not think in nationalistic terms. I was not pro-Spanish; I was pro-Loyalist and anti-Franco though he was a Spaniard. I criticise not Britain but the British policy of holding India in bondage. I criticise those responsible for the policy.

The British hesitate to relinquish India and the empire because they are afraid of living without an empire, they are afraid of their future. The British are afraid of losing their political and economic power if they lose the empire. Here again the problem of India and of empire dovetails with the post-war settlement.

Winston Churchill said on December 12, 1930, "The loss of India would mark and consummate the downfall of the British Empire. That great organism would pass at a stroke out of life into history. From such a catastrophe there would be no recovery." Again, in March, 1931, Churchill declared that "the loss of India would be final and fatal to us. It could not fail to be part of a process that would reduce us to the scale of a minor power." That is why India cannot be free.

Lord Keynes. (John Maynard Keynes), English economist and director of the Bank of England, declared in a 1942 speech, "After this war, England must increase her exports 50 per cent. over 1938. There are no ifs about this. Otherwise England is

Louis Fischer

sunk." How can an England which must have more foreign trade in order to survive surrender India which, because of the tie with the Empire, bought thirty and five-tenths per cent. of its imports from the United Kingdom and sold thirty-four and three-tenths per cent. of her own exports to the United Kingdom in the normal year 1938-1939? (In that same year, fifty-five and seven-tenths per cent. of India's foreign trade was with the United Kingdom and other parts of the British Empire.)

To be sure, England does a large business with the Argentine and with the United States which are not her colonies. Colonies are not indispensable to trade, but they are a convenience which conservatives do not wish to abandon at a moment when they are worried about Britain's rank in world affairs.

Denmark, Sweden, and Switzerland enjoyed very high living standards. As happiness goes, their peoples had happiness and comfort, and those are worthy objects of human endeavour. But England does not seem to be reconciled to a role of a Sweden or Denmark especially since she suspects that that demotion might involve a corresponding reduction in living standards. Indians, of course, see no reason why they should remain colonials because Britain aims to be powerful and prosperous. That apart, it is not at all certain that England would become less prosperous if India were free. England might, become less powerful in the modern sense of physical power (battleships, millions of colonial subjects, hundreds of thousands of colonial troops, vast Asiatic and African domains, etc.), but in certain conditions, Great Britain without India might be richer than with India, just as, according to Lord Castlereigh's statement of 1812, Britain "derived more commercial advantage from North America since the separa-

E m p i r e

tion than she did when that country was . . . part of her colonial system." This was true because the liquidation of the British empire enriched what became the United States and therefore enriched England. It is equally true that the liquidation of the British empire in India would enrich England though it might not enrich all Englishmen. The British nation has succumbed to the illusion that the loss of some Englishmen's economic and social advantages are synonymous with the nation's loss. Interested parties have helped create this illusion. The highest achievement of a ruling group is to convince a nation that the nation's interests are identical with the interests of the ruling group.

India's status as a colony grew out of the commercial operations of the famous East India Company. The first consideration therefore was money-making. This same kind of mercantilism provoked the American Revolution. "The American revolution," writes Raymond Leslie Buell, editor of *Fortune*, "was in the main a revolt against mercantilism, against the exploitation involved in the Navigation, Molasses, Sugar and Stamp Acts. Britain denied the right of the colonies to develop trade, manufactures and even land when they did not directly enrich the merchants of the home country." American colonists resented this interference with their economic development; the Indian colonists resent similar practices to-day.

To say that England exploits India—as she exploited her thirteen North American colonies—is not to censure England. The purpose of empire is to exploit colonies. If imperialism did not exploit colonies the possession of colonies would have no sense.

According to official data, industrial establishments in India with more than twenty persons on their

Louis Fischer

payroll employed a total of 1,940,477 working people in 1937. (This in a country with almost 400,000,000 inhabitants.) Of that total, 916,575 were employed in the textile industry and only 57,433 in all iron and steel mills and other mineral and metal production units.

Every Indian I talked to in India told me that the British had hampered the economic development of India. I asked for proof of these sweeping assertions. I received much proof from Indians, and from Englishmen, too.

A very high British official in India told me that after the Great Mutiny against British rule in 1857, the British did not allow the manufacture of arms in India lest those arms be seized by rebellious Indians. This statement can be corroborated by access to the record. In this case, the motive was political and military.

Usually, however, the motive is political and economic. On July 6, 1942, foreign and Indian newspapermen, among them myself, were invited by the government to attend a lecture in New Delhi by Cyril S. Fox, the British chief of the Indian Geological Survey. After the lecture I asked Dr. Fox for the text of his lecture. He took it out of his pocket and gave it to me. Dr. Fox alluded to the tremendous natural wealth of India. He spoke of considerable exploration for mineral deposits between 1897 and 1902. "Between 1897 and 1902," Dr. Fox states, "several mining specialists had been engaged and it appeared as though the establishment of a distinct Mines Branch on the Canadian plan, was overdue. Instead of this, these mining specialists were largely utilised in the formation of a Bureau of Mines in 1902, and in this way the Geological Survey was deprived of the very personnel required for encouraging mineral development in India. As

a result of this action, the Geological Survey was used more in an advisory capacity than active practical capacity during the War of 1914-18, and in consequence exports rather than industrial development in India became more and more conspicuous."

"Immediately after the successful termination of the last war (1918)," Dr. Fox continues, "an officer was deputed to London as a Minerals adviser to the High Commissioner for India. His duties were chiefly to encourage mineral exports."

These official words show clearly that India's development has been held back so as to feed British home industries with raw materials. It has been British policy in India, and throughout the empire, to discourage the establishment of colonial industries which might compete with industries in Great Britain.

Indian landowners and traders have naturally accumulated much capital, and through the decades it has been impossible to prevent this capital from going into industry, especially textiles. But wherever it could, the British government in India interfered with the setting up of new industries in India. The Conservative London *Economist* of October 10, 1942, criticised the British government for obstructing Indian efforts to industrialise. "The proposals," it said, "to undertake shipbuilding and the manufacture of aeroplanes and automobiles were pooh-poohed."

✓ During my stay in India, I was able to obtain interesting, hitherto-unpublished documents illustrating British discouragement of Indian industries. In 1936, Indian capitalists, headed by Sir Walchand Hirachand, formed a large corporation which proposed to manufacture automobiles and trucks in India. Hirachand went to Detroit and personally negotiated with Walter Chrysler and Henry Ford

Louis Fischer

with a view to enlisting their co-operation along lines similar to the agreement between the Soviet government and Ford. When these negotiations had registered sufficient progress, and production could be undertaken, Sir M. Visvesvaraya, on behalf of the corporation, wrote to the British Viceroy of India requesting that, as an encouragement to this new and important industry, the British government undertake to retain for about ten years the existing thirty-seven and one-half per cent. duty levied on motor vehicles and parts now imported into India, and that, if the corporation's machines answered to the specifications laid down by the British army and government in India, the government purchase the corporation's vehicles instead of imported machines. The Viceroy refused. The correspondence continued from 1936 to 1942. Many letters, all of which I have read, were exchanged between the two sides. But the British government refused to do anything to help the manufacture of cars and trucks in India. We are paying for that in this war. Those trucks and cars must be shipped all the way from Detroit.✓

The same policy was pursued in regard to shipping. On March 19, 1926, Sir Charles Innes, the Commerce Member of the Government of India, explained why. Replying to a request from Indian shipping interests that a part of Indian coastal trade be reserved for Indian ships, Sir Charles refused and said: "Why then have other countries, other nations, thought it necessary to reserve their coastal trade? It is because they thought in the long run it would pay them to take that course in the interests of their own safety. They had to take that course, because in times of war they might want their own mercantile marine to feed their people and because they wanted that marine as a second line to their own navy. All I need say on that point is this, that

India is fortunate in that that overmastering necessity is not present in this country. India's shores are protected for her by the British Navy. . . ." So, India did not have to have a merchant marine. But the British government in India paid tremendous subsidies to British ships in the Indian trade. This is part of the official record. Therefore Mahatma Gandhi could say, "Indian shipping had to perish so that British shipping might flourish." Actually, according to official British data, Indian participation in Indian coastal shipping in 1938—an average year—was twenty-one per cent., British seventy-nine per cent.

One of the results of the British government's policy to hamper Indian industries is that practically all Indian capitalists are staunch Indian nationalists and support the Gandhi independence movement with huge sums of money. They are reconciled to Jawaharlal Nehru's progressive social and economic ideas because he is a nationalist, and he collaborates with them because they are ready to collaborate with him.

Indians point out how little Britain has done to develop India. The British point to what they have done: railroads, irrigation schemes, electricity, etc. The dispute is not one of figures, for they are available in the official statistics. It is a controversy of viewpoints; the British feel that what has been accomplished is enough to deserve praise and the Indians feel that it is so little as to justify condemnation. The Indians contend that the British have been in India for over one hundred and fifty years and in that time England, America, Germany, France, and Italy became modern industrial societies. They stress especially the tremendous strides which medieval Japan made after it was opened up to modern enterprise less than a hundred years ago.

L O N I S F i s c h e r

If Japan could do it, they submit, why not India? Because Japan was free and India a colony? Since all people are charitable to themselves this is the answer they give, and it intensifies their displeasure with British rule.

An imperialist power is always in a tragic position: the more backward the colony the less the colony complains. The more progress registered by the colony the more progress it demands and the more irked it is by artificial brakes on its progress. The colony is rarely grateful for what it has; it grumbles about what it has not got. The British have taught many Indian students the virtues of democracy. The Indians accordingly want it. India and Egypt and Algeria and Syria and Palestine and Java are not discontented because the imperial country has not helped them grow; they are discontented because it has helped them grow—but not enough. When they see instances of the deliberate obstruction of their industrialisation their discontent is intensified.

The paucity of Indian factories reacts unfavourably on Indian agriculture. The farmers get few agricultural machines. There are few big cities to offer a market for farm products. Peasants who are not needed in the villages cannot migrate to the cities because they would not find jobs, because city wages are so low, and because city housing is so miserable. So the villages are over-crowded with many millions of "invisible" unemployed. In recent years, the excess population in the Indian countryside has resulted in further reducing the amount of food available per person and in further reducing the amount of land available for individual cultivation.

It is possible to understand, without condoning, Britain's policy of frowning on the industrialisation of her colonies, and even dominions. The old mer-

cantile spirit implies free competition at home, but none from the colonies. But then why did not the British government try to develop Indian agriculture which gives ninety per cent. of India its livelihood? That would make the peasants a bigger market for British exports and greater producers of food and vegetable raw materials for England.

The answers to this question throw light on the worst evil of empire. One reason for India's agrarian backwardness is the antiquated method of land tenure and land inheritance which breaks up farms into smaller and smaller strips. Another reason is the sacredness of the cow. No British government, no foreign government could dare to tamper with these institutions which lie deeply imbedded in Indian traditions and superstitions. Only a free Indian government could try. Sensing this, many of the big landlords oppose freedom for India. The Moslem League, with the exception of President Jinnah, a rich lawyer, consists almost entirely of very rich estate owners who see independence for India as a threat to their domination in the Indian village. The Indian princes and maharajahs, likewise possessors of huge latifundia, have a similar interest in maintaining the land-tenure (and political) *status quo*. Birds of a feather flock together. The defenders of the *status quo* in England find their allies in India. The Moslem League uses the nationalistic slogan of a separate Moslem state (Pakistan) to win the Moslem peasants to its banner. Thus Pakistan, which the Cripps offer sanctioned in principle, becomes a means of further enslaving the peasant to the landlord and India to Britain.

The very wealthy Hindu industrialist probably exploits his factory working men as cruelly as the Hindu prince and Moslem landlord do their peasants. But the industrialist needs independence to remove

Louis Fischer

British barriers to India's industrial development and his own enrichment, whereas the Indian landlord needs British rule to prolong Indian agrarian backwardness. The Hindu industrialist is therefore an agent of progress even though he may be personally as reactionary as the landlord. The industrialist consequently backs the Indian nationalist movement; many landlords back the British

But an even deeper consideration motivates British policy toward Indian agriculture. If the population of India, the bulk of which is peasant, were prosperous and educated, it would have the power and the united will to break away from the empire. Subconsciously, therefore, the imperialist country acquires a vested interest in the poverty, ignorance, and division of the colony. This is the greatest crime of imperialism, of all imperialisms.

Imperialism has made the world poorer.

One does not have to be in India for more than five days or a week to know the three major facts about the country: (1) India is heartbreakingly poor, (2) the people are overwhelmingly anti-British, (3) the British in India live in a world apart, mingle very little with Indians, look down upon Indians, and have a minimum of sympathy for the people.

When I reached Bombay, the Indian Journalists' Association asked me to address its members. I agreed to sit with them and try to answer questions. In response to one of their questions, I made a statement in favour of the war and sketched the bleak prospect for all of us if fascism won the war. An Indian journalist rose and said, "For us Indians there is no difference between Japanese fascism and British fascism."

"Now look," I said, "England is not fascist. England is very democratic, and, in many political respects, much more democratic than my own coun-

try, the United States. I know," I went on, "that you dislike the measures of repression which the British occasionally adopt in India. But since I arrived in India, almost every fifth person has told me that he has been in jail. Now I have lived for years in Germany. In that country one rarely meets anybody who has been in jail: they are in jail, and many of them have been shot."

"The British don't bother shooting us. They kill us," another Indian journalist exclaimed.

I asked him what he meant.

He said, "The average length of life in India is twenty-seven years. In England it is sixty years; in the United States sixty-three years." I later found those figures in the official British statistics.

A third Indian journalist added, "Forty-five per cent. of all children born in India die before the age of five." That, too, is an official British figure.

Several members of the audience thereupon commented bitterly on the low rate of literacy in India. They explained that education was so rare because schools were few; higher schools and technical institutes were also few. They said that the British government concentrated on the training of clerks for its Indian administration. It was not very interested in the education of engineers, doctors, architects, foresters, farm experts.

In all of India, in 1939, according to the official *Statistical Abstract for British India*, only 3,561 students were studying medicine, 2,413 were studying engineering, 1,306 were studying agriculture, 719 were studying veterinary science, 150 were studying technology, and 63 were studying forestry in colleges and universities. These figures constitute an indictment.

The vocal sections of the colonial population are irritated by the cultural backwardness and material suffering which they, naturally, attribute exclusively

Louis Fischer

to the presence of the foreign master. The mass of the people, led by such leaders, but chiefly by their instincts, regard the imperial ruler as the source of all their woes. The imperial government is blamed for what it does and what it does not do. A young aide of the Viceroy said to me at lunch in the Viceroy's palace, "Indians are incapable of gratitude." He said it with an understandable bitterness, for the British think mainly of what they have done to improve conditions in India, whereas the Indians think of what the British might have done and have left undone.

The British say, We built railroads. The Indians reply, India, with three times the population of the United States and two-thirds the area, had 41,134 miles of railroad track in 1939, when the United States had 395,589 miles of track. India produced 2,500 million kilowatt hours of electric energy in 1935. The United States produced 98,464 million kilowatt hours in the same year. This means that every American can use approximately 120 times as much electricity as an Indian—which gives a general idea of India's economic lag. I used to think that China was poor and retarded. But it is agreed that the standard of living in India is even lower than in China.

The key problem in India is population. The Indian birth rate and death rate are extremely high; both are reflections of poverty and ignorance. The sick rate is high. Half a million Indians die of tuberculosis every year. The British report that 125 million persons in India get malaria every year—and only a few thousand can afford quinine. It is a fact that in the same climate, an Indian settlement will have a mortality and illness rate five times higher than that of a nearby British area.

Despite physical debility, disease, and deaths, the population of India is increasing five million each

Justice of the Indian Supreme Court, ruled in a published decision that the Indian nationalists had been arrested illegally under a statute that had no validity. What did the British Viceroy do? Did he release them? No. On April 28, 1943, he autocratically issued a new ordinance validating the arrests of August, 1942. Is such procedure in the midst of a war for democracy a service to the cause of the United Nations?

More power to Churchill's honesty, therefore. He does not stoop to facile demagogic charges. He does not charge friends of Indian freedom with sympathy for Goebbels. He is not anti-Gandhi because Gandhi is allegedly pro-Japanese. He is anti-Gandhi because of what Gandhi stood for in 1935 and what Gandhi always stood for: India's independence from the British empire.

The charge that Gandhi is pro-Japanese is a canard for the digestion of the gullible and a lie which sticks in the throats of those who speak it. Chiang Kai-shek, the Chinese leader, would not have intervened on behalf of Gandhi if the Mahatma were pro-Japanese. If Gandhi were pro-anything he would be pro-British and pro-American because he is steeped in the literature of freedom of the Anglo-Saxon democracies. Actually, however, he is only pro-Indian, much too pro-Indian for my taste. During the week I spent as his house guest, Gandhi never listened to the radio (there was no radio in his village) and only occasionally looked at the headlines of newspapers. His interests are limited to India. Those who suffer from the denial of nationhood become excessively nationalistic, and I found many Indian nationalists very introspective and India-centred. They wanted independence; little else mattered to them. Jawaharlal Nehru is the brilliant exception, and his following, especially among the

L o u i s F i s c h e r

younger generation, is large. He is a man of the world, an internationalist, a proved and active anti-fascist who yearns for a better India within a better world and knows that he will not have the one without the other. Gandhi's goal is Indian freedom. Nehru's reaches beyond. Gandhi, the deeply religious Hindu, the profound pacifist, abhors the Japanese state for its militarism, its terror, its atrocities, its worship of the warrior. To say that Gandhi is pro-Japanese is like saying that Churchill is pro-Nazi. If Churchill were in prison and could not reply, some fools might believe the charge if it were repeated often enough by prominent persons with access to the channels of propaganda.

Deeply anti-imperialistic by the logic of his whole political life, Gandhi could no more be pro-Japanese than Chiang Kai-shek who has warned the West that "unless real world co-operation replaces both isolationism and imperialism . . . there will be no lasting security for you or for us." On the other hand, Mr. Leopold S. Amery, the British Secretary of State for India, defended Japan's invasion of Manchuria—and for a very interesting reason. "Who is there among us," he exclaimed in the House of Commons on February 27, 1933, "to cast the first stone and to say that Japan ought not to have acted with the object of creating peace and order in Manchuria and defending herself against the continual aggression of vigorous Chinese nationalism? Our whole policy in India, our whole policy in Egypt, stands condemned if we condemn Japan."

This parallel between Japan's suppression of "vigorous Chinese nationalism" and England's attitude toward vigorous Indian nationalism and vigorous Egyptian nationalism reveals the thinking of the British imperialist who, to be true to himself

and his own role in the East, appeased Japan until Japanese imperialism clashed with his imperialism to produce this second world war. Thus aggressive imperialism as well as conservative, defensive imperialism makes its contributions to international conflict. The blood of our dead and wounded fighting men condemns both these evils.

There are American troops and American airmen in India. There are Chinese troops in India. India will be our base against Japan, and if the base does not co-operate the war may be prolonged, and Americans, Chinese, Frenchmen and others as well as Britons will pay. That is why India is America's business, China's business, world business. As H. N. Brailsford, the brilliant British publicist, says, "I believe that India is the concern not merely of Britain but of all the United Nations, and that America with China may have a part to play in shaping its future." What happens in India will help mould the shape of the peace, may indeed ruin the peace. That is why President Roosevelt, Chiang Kai-shek, Cordell Hull, Sumner Welles, Henry Wallace, President Quezon, Wendell Willkie, and Louis Johnson and William Phillips whom the President sent to India as his personal envoys, have been deeply concerned with the state of affairs in India. That is why those who understand what the war has been about and how easily the peace may be endangered, have been critical of British policy in India.

The British have demonstrated their tremendous courage during this war. They can take it. They should be able to take criticism. They always had that capacity. It was always part of the civilisation of the British that they could see their own faults and tolerate their critics. Certain continental nations have often lacked this virtue. One hopes the British will not lose it. We are fighting this war, in part,

Louis Fischer

in order to retain the right to criticise. In a dictatorship one does not criticise the government, or, rather, one does not criticise it twice. Englishmen like Brailsford, Aneurin Bevan, Member of the House of Commons, Lord Strabolgi, Harold J. Laski, and others who condemn British policy in India do not thereby become anti-British. Neither does an American. I am not anti-British. I am anti-Tory and anti-imperialist. I would not become anti-American by criticising the Roosevelt Administration. My criticism would only reflect my desire to see the war prosecuted with greater effectiveness. British policy in India handicaps the war effort. It makes many people throughout the world doubt United Nations declarations on war aims. It undermines the faith of Indians and innumerable non-Indians in the benefits that should flow from this bloody conflict.

Churchill's refusal to liquidate the empire at least has the virtue of directness. He wants to beat the Axis and keep India. He sees no contradiction. That is a point of view. There may be other points of view.

In India, I met many Englishmen who were sincere, hard-working servants of their country and deeply convinced of the good they had done to India in the long years of their work under trying conditions. Few of them are great but all are loyal. The Viceroy himself toiled many hours for many years at a thankless task and it must have been painful for him to leave India in the midst of famine and widespread discontent. I was impressed when Sir Gilbert Laithwait, the Viceroy's Private Secretary, and Major General Molesworth, first assistant to Wavell, bicycled to and from work under the hot Indian sun in order to save gasoline though they had the cars and the gasoline and the drivers. India

E m p i r e

has been governed by generations of honest British officials who did what they could within the limits set by British policies and British imperial interests. They had less co-operation from Indians than they deserved, but as much as they could expect, for the Indian hesitates to stand by the foreign ruler. If India is to be ruled by any outside country she is probably best off under the British. My criticism is aimed not at individual administrators or at a nation, for I do not think in nationalistic terms. I was not pro-Spanish; I was pro-Loyalist and anti-Franco though he was a Spaniard. I criticise not Britain but the British policy of holding India in bondage. I criticise those responsible for the policy.

The British hesitate to relinquish India and the empire because they are afraid of living without an empire, they are afraid of their future. The British are afraid of losing their political and economic power if they lose the empire. Here again the problem of India and of empire dovetails with the post-war settlement.

Winston Churchill said on December 12, 1930, "The loss of India would mark and consummate the downfall of the British Empire. That great organism would pass at a stroke out of life into history. From such a catastrophe there would be no recovery." Again, in March, 1931, Churchill declared that "the loss of India would be final and fatal to us. It could not fail to be part of a process that would reduce us to the scale of a minor power." That is why India cannot be free.

Lord Keynes (John Maynard Keynes), English economist and director of the Bank of England, declared in a 1942 speech, "After this war, England must increase her exports 50 per cent. over 1938. There are no ifs about this. Otherwise England is

Louis Fischer

sunk." How can an England which must have more foreign trade in order to survive surrender India which, because of the tie with the Empire, bought thirty and five-tenths per cent. of its imports from the United Kingdom and sold thirty-four and three-tenths per cent. of her own exports to the United Kingdom in the normal year 1938-1939? (In that same year, fifty-five and seven-tenths per cent. of India's foreign trade was with the United Kingdom and other parts of the British Empire.)

To be sure, England does a large business with the Argentine and with the United States which are not her colonies. Colonies are not indispensable to trade, but they are a convenience which conservatives do not wish to abandon at a moment when they are worried about Britain's rank in world affairs.

Denmark, Sweden, and Switzerland enjoyed very high living standards. As happiness goes, their peoples had happiness and comfort, and those are worthy objects of human endeavour. But England does not seem to be reconciled to a role of a Sweden or Denmark especially since she suspects that that demotion might involve a corresponding reduction in living standards. Indians, of course, see no reason why they should remain colonials because Britain aims to be powerful and prosperous. That apart, it is not at all certain that England would become less prosperous if India were free. England might become less powerful in the modern sense of physical power (battleships, millions of colonial subjects, hundreds of thousands of colonial troops, vast Asiatic and African domains, etc.), but in certain conditions, Great Britain without India might be richer than with India, just as, according to Lord Castlereigh's statement of 1812, Britain "derived more commercial advantage from North America since the separa-

tion than she did when that country was . . . part of her colonial system." This was true because the liquidation of the British empire enriched what became the United States and therefore enriched England. It is equally true that the liquidation of the British empire in India would enrich England though it might not enrich all Englishmen. The British nation has succumbed to the illusion that the loss of some Englishmen's economic and social advantages are synonymous with the nation's loss. Interested parties have helped create this illusion. The highest achievement of a ruling group is to convince a nation that the nation's interests are identical with the interests of the ruling group.

India's status as a colony grew out of the commercial operations of the famous East India Company. The first consideration therefore was money-making. This same kind of mercantilism provoked the American Revolution. "The American revolution," writes Raymond Leslie Buell, editor of *Fortune*, "was in the main a revolt against mercantilism, against the exploitation involved in the Navigation, Molasses, Sugar and Stamp Acts. Britain denied the right of the colonies to develop trade, manufactures and even land when they did not directly enrich the merchants of the home country." American colonists resented this interference with their economic development; the Indian colonists resent similar practices to-day.

To say that England exploits India—as she exploited her thirteen North American colonies—is not to censure England. The purpose of empire is to exploit colonies. If imperialism did not exploit colonies the possession of colonies would have no sense.

According to official data, industrial establishments in India with more than twenty persons on their

Louis Fischer

payroll employed a total of 1,940,477 working people in 1937. (This in a country with almost 400,000,000 inhabitants.) Of that total, 916,575 were employed in the textile industry and only 57,433 in all iron and steel mills and other mineral and metal production units.

Every Indian I talked to in India told me that the British had hampered the economic development of India. I asked for proof of these sweeping assertions. I received much proof from Indians, and from Englishmen, too.

A very high British official in India told me that after the Great Mutiny against British rule in 1857, the British did not allow the manufacture of arms in India lest those arms be seized by rebellious Indians. This statement can be corroborated by access to the record. In this case, the motive was political and military.

Usually, however, the motive is political and economic. On July 6, 1942, foreign and Indian newspapermen, among them myself, were invited by the government to attend a lecture in New Delhi by Cyril S. Fox, the British chief of the Indian Geological Survey. After the lecture I asked Dr. Fox for the text of his lecture. He took it out of his pocket and gave it to me. Dr. Fox alluded to the tremendous natural wealth of India. He spoke of considerable exploration for mineral deposits between 1897 and 1902. "Between 1897 and 1902," Dr. Fox states, "several mining specialists had been engaged and it appeared as though the establishment of a distinct Mines Branch on the Canadian plan was overdue. Instead of this, these mining specialists were largely utilised in the formation of a Bureau of Mines in 1902, and in this way the Geological Survey was deprived of the very personnel required for encouraging mineral development in India. As

a result of this action, the Geological Survey was used more in an advisory capacity than active practical capacity during the War of 1914-18, and in consequence exports rather than industrial development in India became more and more conspicuous."

"Immediately after the successful termination of the last war (1918)," Dr. Fox continues. "an officer was deputed to London as a Minerals adviser to the High Commissioner for India. His duties were chiefly to encourage mineral exports."

These official words show clearly that India's development has been held back so as to feed British home industries with raw materials. It has been British policy in India, and throughout the empire, to discourage the establishment of colonial industries which might compete with industries in Great Britain.

Indian landowners and traders have naturally accumulated much capital, and through the decades it has been impossible to prevent this capital from going into industry, especially textiles. But wherever it could, the British government in India interfered with the setting up of new industries in India. The Conservative London *Economist* of October 10, 1942, criticised the British government for obstructing Indian efforts to industrialise. "The proposals," it said, "to undertake shipbuilding and the manufacture of aeroplanes and automobiles were pooh-poohed."

During my stay in India, I was able to obtain interesting, hitherto-unpublished documents illustrating British discouragement of Indian industries. In 1936, Indian capitalists, headed by Sir Walchand Hirachand, formed a large corporation which proposed to manufacture automobiles and trucks in India. Hirachand went to Detroit and personally negotiated with Walter Chrysler and Henry Ford

L o u i s F i s c h e r

with a view to enlisting their co-operation along lines similar to the agreement between the Soviet government and Ford. When these negotiations had registered sufficient progress, and production could be undertaken, Sir M. Visvesvaraya, on behalf of the corporation, wrote to the British Viceroy of India requesting that, as an encouragement to this new and important industry, the British government undertake to retain for about ten years the existing thirty-seven and one-half per cent. duty levied on motor vehicles and parts now imported into India, and that, if the corporation's machines answered to the specifications laid down by the British army and government in India, the government purchase the corporation's vehicles instead of imported machines. The Viceroy refused. The correspondence continued from 1936 to 1942. Many letters, all of which I have read, were exchanged between the two sides. But the British government refused to do anything to help the manufacture of cars and trucks in India. We are paying for that in this war. Those trucks and cars must be shipped all the way from Detroit.

The same policy was pursued in regard to shipping. On March 19, 1926, Sir Charles Innes, the Commerce Member of the Government of India, explained why. Replying to a request from Indian shipping interests that a part of Indian coastal trade be reserved for Indian ships, Sir Charles refused and said: "Why then have other countries, other nations, thought it necessary to reserve their coastal trade? It is because they thought in the long run it would pay them to take that course in the interests of their own safety. They had to take that course, because in times of war they might want their own mercantile marine to feed their people and because they wanted that marine as a second line to their own navy. All I need say on that point is this, that

India is fortunate in that that overmastering necessity is not present in this country. India's shores are protected for her by the British Navy. . . ." So, India did not have to have a merchant marine. But the British government in India paid tremendous subsidies to British ships in the Indian trade. This is part of the official record. Therefore Mahatma Gandhi could say, "Indian shipping had to perish so that British shipping might flourish." Actually, according to official British data, Indian participation in Indian coastal shipping in 1938—an average year—was twenty-one per cent., British seventy-nine per cent.

One of the results of the British government's policy to hamper Indian industries is that practically all Indian capitalists are staunch Indian nationalists and support the Gandhi independence movement with huge sums of money. They are reconciled to Jawaharlal Nehru's progressive social and economic ideas because he is a nationalist, and he collaborates with them because they are ready to collaborate with him.

Indians point out how little Britain has done to develop India. The British point to what they have done: railroads, irrigation schemes, electricity, etc. The dispute is not one of figures, for they are available in the official statistics. It is a controversy of viewpoints; the British feel that what has been accomplished is enough to deserve praise and the Indians feel that it is so little as to justify condemnation. The Indians contend that the British have been in India for over one hundred and fifty years and in that time England, America, Germany, France, and Italy became modern industrial societies. They stress especially the tremendous strides which medieval Japan made after it was opened up to modern enterprise less than a hundred years ago.

Louis Fischer

If Japan could do it, they submit, why not India? Because Japan was free and India a colony? Since all people are charitable to themselves this is the answer they give, and it intensifies their displeasure with British rule.

An imperialist power is always in a tragic position: the more backward the colony the less the colony complains. The more progress registered by the colony the more progress it demands and the more irked it is by artificial brakes on its progress. The colony is rarely grateful for what it has; it grumbles about what it has not got. The British have taught many Indian students the virtues of democracy. The Indians accordingly want it. India and Egypt and Algeria and Syria and Palestine and Java are not discontented because the imperial country has not helped them grow; they are discontented because it has helped them grow—but not enough. When they see instances of the deliberate obstruction of their industrialisation their discontent is intensified.

The paucity of Indian factories reacts unfavourably on Indian agriculture. The farmers get few agricultural machines. There are few big cities to offer a market for farm products. Peasants who are not needed in the villages cannot migrate to the cities because they would not find jobs, because city wages are so low, and because city housing is so miserable. So the villages are over-crowded with many millions of "invisible" unemployed. In recent years, the excess population in the Indian countryside has resulted in further reducing the amount of food available per person and in further reducing the amount of land available for individual cultivation.

It is possible to understand, without condoning, Britain's policy of frowning on the industrialisation of her colonies, and even dominions. The old mer-

cantile spirit implies free competition at home, but none from the colonies. But then why did not the British government try to develop Indian agriculture which gives ninety per cent. of India its livelihood? That would make the peasants a bigger market for British exports and greater producers of food and vegetable raw materials for England.

The answers to this question throw light on the worst evil of empire. One reason for India's agrarian backwardness is the antiquated method of land tenure and land inheritance which breaks up farms into smaller and smaller strips. Another reason is the sacredness of the cow. No British government, no foreign government could dare to tamper with these institutions which lie deeply imbedded in Indian traditions and superstitions. Only a free Indian government could try. Sensing this, many of the big landlords oppose freedom for India. The Moslem League, with the exception of President Jinnah, a rich lawyer, consists almost entirely of very rich estate owners who see independence for India as a threat to their domination in the Indian village. The Indian princes and maharajahs, likewise possessors of huge latifundia, have a similar interest in maintaining the land-tenure (and political) *status quo*. Birds of a feather flock together. The defenders of the *status quo* in England find their allies in India. The Moslem League uses the nationalistic slogan of a separate Moslem state (Pakistan) to win the Moslem peasants to its banner. Thus Pakistan, which the Cripps offer sanctioned in principle, becomes a means of further enslaving the peasant to the landlord and India to Britain.

The very wealthy Hindu industrialist probably exploits his factory working men as cruelly as the Hindu prince and Moslem landlord do their peasants. But the industrialist needs independence to remove

Louis Fischer

British barriers to India's industrial development and his own enrichment, whereas the Indian landlord needs British rule to prolong Indian agrarian backwardness. The Hindu industrialist is therefore an agent of progress even though he may be personally as reactionary as the landlord. The industrialist consequently backs the Indian nationalist movement; many landlords back the British

But an even deeper consideration motivates British policy toward Indian agriculture. If the population of India, the bulk of which is peasant, were prosperous and educated, it would have the power and the united will to break away from the empire. Subconsciously, therefore, the imperialist country acquires a vested interest in the poverty, ignorance, and division of the colony. This is the greatest crime of imperialism, of all imperialisms.

Imperialism has made the world poorer.

One does not have to be in India for more than five days or a week to know the three major facts about the country: (1) India is heartbreakingly poor, (2) the people are overwhelmingly anti-British, (3) the British in India live in a world apart, mingle very little with Indians, look down upon Indians, and have a minimum of sympathy for the people.

When I reached Bombay, the Indian Journalists' Association asked me to address its members. I agreed to sit with them and try to answer questions. In response to one of their questions, I made a statement in favour of the war and sketched the bleak prospect for all of us if fascism won the war. An Indian journalist rose and said, "For us Indians there is no difference between Japanese fascism and British fascism."

"Now look," I said, "England is not fascist. England is very democratic, and, in many political respects, much more democratic than my own coun-

try, the United States. I know," I went on, "that you dislike the measures of repression which the British occasionally adopt in India. But since I arrived in India, almost every fifth person has told me that he has been in jail. Now I have lived for years in Germany. In that country one rarely meets anybody who has been in jail; they are in jail, and many of them have been shot."

"The British don't bother shooting us. They kill us," another Indian journalist exclaimed.

I asked him what he meant.

He said, "The average length of life in India is twenty-seven years. In England it is sixty years; in the United States sixty-three years." I later found those figures in the official British statistics.

A third Indian journalist added, "Forty-five per cent. of all children born in India die before the age of five." That, too, is an official British figure.

Several members of the audience thereupon commented bitterly on the low rate of literacy in India. They explained that education was so rare because schools were few; higher schools and technical institutes were also few. They said that the British government concentrated on the training of clerks for its Indian administration. It was not very interested in the education of engineers, doctors, architects, foresters, farm experts.

In all of India, in 1939, according to the official *Statistical Abstract for British India*, only 3,561 students were studying medicine, 2,413 were studying engineering, 1,306 were studying agriculture, 719 were studying veterinary science, 150 were studying technology, and 63 were studying forestry in colleges and universities. These figures constitute an indictment.

The vocal sections of the colonial population, limited by the cultural backwardness and suffering which they, naturally, attribute

Louis Fischer

England's hand. The key to the nation - life is in the foreigner's pocket. Indians are powerless to change any fundamental condition. Independence, therefore, is the pre-requisite of material and social well-being. In the absence of both independence and well-being, discontent is the prevailing state of mind. It corrodes even the spirit of the imperialist administrators. The sensitive British civil servants I encountered in India were disconsolate because they were unappreciated. They knew they were sitting on a lid which kept people down, and they could not defend their role. It undermined their morale. The excuses one hears for the continuation of British rule in India sometimes stem not so much from a desire to prolong that rule as to give the rulers the sense that it is just while it lasts. For a moment in India I had the impression that some of the administrators would be happy to get out if the world gave them a certificate of past achievement. India is a very sad place. Among the saddest people in it are the British officials; they live comfortably, some even luxuriously. But they are lonely, and they know they are not wanted.

Empires are bad for the imperialists and they are bad for the colonies. But, above all, they are bad for the world. It is bad that three-fourths of the human race should live like animals. If we take China, which has been a semi-colonial country, India, and the other colonies of Asia and of Africa, three-fourths of the two billion human beings on the planet eat little, wear little, and enjoy little shelter or cultural necessities. Three-fourths of humanity constitutes an economic desert whose production and consumption is shamefully low. That hurts all of us.

If three-fourths of the United States suddenly became an economic desert with no factories, few houses, no railroads, a few poor farms and scattered

telegraph and telephone lines, the remaining one-fourth of the United States would be that much poorer. It is equally true, though less obvious, that when three-fourths of the world is an economic desert, the 500,000,000 inhabitants of the remaining quarter are poorer, more insecure, more exposed to economic depressions and more likely to be dragged into war.

Sumner Welles, Willkie, Henry Wallace, and others are anti-imperialists because they see that empires are war-makers and slump-makers. America therefore wants no colonies. Mr. Henry S. Villard, assistant chief of the Near East division of the State Department, asserted on August 19, 1943, that "this government—in keeping with its traditional policy throughout the world—has no designs on the colonial possessions of other nations and no desire to carve out for its exclusive benefit any portion of Africa." There had been rumours that we did want portions of Africa. Mr. Villard stated that he was expressing "the standpoint of the American government." This official declaration also included a plea for an "open door" trade policy to make raw materials accessible to all, thereby destroying what Mr. Villard called "one of the fundamental excuses for conquest by force." He advocated an "international trusteeship" for some colonies and added that "it was improbable that the United States would alone accept jurisdiction or control over former enemy territory."

America, in other words, favours the multinational control of colonies. When one country owns a colony the door is rarely if ever completely open, and a closed door is not only an excuse for aggression, it is the cause of colonial misery and grumbling.

Above all, the closed door of empires accounts for the vast economic deserts which embrace a billion

Louis Fischer

and a half unhappy colonial and semi-colonial peoples.

In the Air Age that is now dawning, America's wealth, size and growth raise her to the rank of Nation Number One. As such, she needs internationalism and the fullest development of subject peoples. America's anti-imperialism is part idealism, but in larger part it is self-interest. Freedom is good for the soul and good for business and peace. The economic deserts help no country and no cause. At a time when speed is making the world smaller, the economic deserts make it too small for comfort.

"You will not get peace without social improvement," Anthony Eden, British Foreign Secretary, has said. This is a profound thought simply stated. But it means nothing unless it applies to India, Java, Morocco, and all other colonies. The more universal the social improvement the greater its effect in maintaining peace.

This is the crux of the problem of empire and of India. India's ties to Britain are, in part, trade bonds. British publicists, officials, and speakers may argue endlessly, as they do to-day, that England does not need India for business or profit, and they will energetically present the necessary statistics. But the brilliant words of Churchill dispel this propaganda fog. "We have on this island," Churchill said in a broadcast on January 29, 1935, "a population of forty-five millions living at a higher level than the people of any other European country. One-third of these would have to go down, out or under if we ceased to be a great empire with world-wide connections and trade."

Mr. Churchill's statement is true of Mr. Churchill's old ailing world. But it need not be true for ever. Things could be very different in a different kind of world. Mr. Churchill thinks in terms of a world that is three-fourths desert and one-fourth non-desert.

E m p i r e

But suppose 400,000,000 Indians started wearing shoes. Suppose 450,000,000 Chinese started wearing pants and shoes. There would not be enough labour and machines on the planet to meet such expanded demands.

If the economic deserts of the world were watered and ploughed and seeded and harrowed and cultivated and harvested, Churchill and those who worry with him would not have to worry about unemployment in England as a result of independence for India. England, America, and all other countries would be piled high with work designed to liquidate the economic deserts.

In a static world with a relatively limited purchasing power, the loss of India would be a blow to British economy. But if a billion and a half human beings acquired new purchasing power by acquiring freedom the world would cease to be static. The dead hand of empire would be removed. The artificial imperialistic barriers to the development of India and other colonies would no longer exist. The liquidation of empire would be followed by the liquidation of the economic deserts. Then China might become a rich country, and India might become rich—not overnight, of course, and not without foreign capitalistic help. But gradually they would buy more abroad and sell more abroad, and all the nations of the earth would benefit thereby. Especially would Great Britain benefit thereby. In a world with an ever-rising, rapidly rising standard of living for all, unemployment, high tariffs, colonies, and insecurity would be unnecessary.

The separation of India will be a boon to England, even as the separation of the thirteen American colonies was a boon to England. The British fought that separation; they did not understand it. They now fight India's separation. They fight because they wish to retain the small commercial gains and

Louis Fischer

the political power which empire gives them. This is the Tory spirit of 1776. But England would win greater commercial gains and moral strength by relinquishing India. Politically, too, as Asia struggles increasingly for self-assertion, empires will become greater liabilities. The imperialist nations would be better off if they were wise enough to make graceful exits.

Innumerable Englishmen, Dutchmen, and others begin to grasp this profound truth. Their views carry a little weight. To-morrow, they may carry more weight. But for the moment the British, Dutch, French, and Portuguese Churchills have the upper hand. They struggle to keep the upper hand. The existence of empire helps them in that struggle. England would gain economically if India were lost. But some Englishmen would lose economically and politically if India were set free. Those Englishmen influence government policy. So they hold on to India and they unite with reactionary Indian princes, landlords, and officials in order to maintain that hold. Thus international groups of backward-looking self-seekers perpetuate the economic deserts and retard world progress.

The collapse of Italy's African Empire—thanks chiefly to British arms but also in part to American military efforts—could show the way to a modern solution of the colonial problem in Asia. Speaking of the Italians in the House of Commons on September 21, 1943, Winston Churchill said, "Their empire has been lost." He pounded the desk before him and exclaimed, "Irretrievably lost." The House applauded. So Italy will not get back Abyssinia, now under British protection, nor North African sands. The American government has announced that it would not "alone accept jurisdiction of control over former enemy territory." Does not this situation invite the formation of an "international

E m p i r e

trusteeship" for backward colonies? . Collective guardianship of backward colonies and collective assistance to colonies that are ripe for freedom—that is the solution of the colonial problem in the day of air age internationalism.

War can be won quickest with munitions plus the politics of freedom. Give the colonial man freedom and a future and he will fight fascism which seeks to enslave him again.

The end of empire would mark the dawn of a new world. The champions of the old world therefore fight the end of empire. It is natural that this clash should come during a war for a new world.

The war will either bring a new world or a new world war.

Mr. Neville Chamberlain was an appeaser because he was afraid that if England became involved in a war, his England, the England of privilege, aristocracy, and plutocratic power would die. He feared the eclipse of his class. But Churchill said, No. England can fight this war and win it and remain the old England. Churchill is a fighter. He accepts neither retreat nor defeat. He is fighting for the old England, reformed domestically to be sure, but not very much. And Churchill's old England includes India.

In seeking to keep India, Churchill is fighting for his old England and old world. By keeping his old England and his old world he will keep India. The question of India therefore transcends India. It becomes a question of whether there will be a new England in a new peaceful world.

India is 400,000,000 people and that is important enough. But India is more than India. Empire is more than empire. These matters involve the future of civilisation, the fate of humanity. India is a slice of the peace problem. India is of the woof and

Louis Fischer

warp of the peace problem and cannot be separated from the peace problem.

Internationalism and imperialism are rival, hostile forms of organisation. The struggle for empire disrupted the League of Nations. Imperialism will hamper and destroy a new and better international union. To build for 1975 and use bricks from 1775 is folly. The past must instruct the future, not obstruct it. The spread of fascism in peace-time—and it conquered not only Italy, Germany, and Japan—was due to the desire of so many people for an alternative to what they had. This hankering for a change that improves is one of the most powerful urges of the modern age. It is legitimate and justified. It can be harnessed and perverted by gangster statesmen. Wise leaders would use it to inaugurate a golden age of freedom and happiness. Only a free, happy, prosperous world will be a peaceful world.

This war is different from all previous wars. In days gone by, nations often had the naive idea that the only purpose of fighting a war was to win it. But governments now feel that the real purpose of a war is to win the war and the post-war. Military strategy may be shaped by the need of political victory as well as of military victory. Those who cried "Stop talking politics and let's get on with the war" were merely revealing their fear that no one would listen to them. The war was the result of pre-war politics and the beginning of post-war politics. War is politics.

The idea of a moratorium on politics is as preposterous as the idea of a moratorium on life itself. Nations are jockeying for positions in the post-war period. It is in this sense that the peace is being made every day. The attitudes of various governments toward the French in North Africa, toward the King, Badoglio, and the workers' move-

ment in Italy, toward the problem of what to do about Germany, toward relations with Russia, and toward India and China are parts of the shape of things to come. These attitudes do not form the pattern of a bright new world. Indeed, to-day the shape of the peace resembles a dark shadow.

So far, the emerging outline of the peace includes: (1) Official assertions and concrete indications that empires will not be liquidated. This spells war. (2) A strong trend within governments, backed by some publicists, toward alliances and power politics. That has spelled war in the past. (3) Rumbings of coming rivalry between national merchant marines and commercial air services. That will not conduce to international amity. (4) Official demands for more territory, official attempts at territorial bargaining and official pressure for frontier rectification. These, to judge by history, contain the seeds of new armed conflicts. (5) The obvious intention of the dominant members of the United Nations to impose on Europe regimes of their own making. Russia has her plans for Germany, Poland, and Czechoslovakia, while England and the United States have demonstrated that they approve of a certain kind of continental set-up and will reject other kinds. But Europe does not want outside domination any more than Asia does. Moreover, the schemes Moscow has prepared for export differ radically from the Anglo-American schemes. The unity required for peace is lacking.

These are five reasons for the widespread pessimism about the chances of a good, prolonged peace. These are five reasons why there is already much talk about a third world war. But as against these five concrete threats to the peace, other developments justify restrained optimism: the appearance of China as a vocally anti-imperialist power; the persistent strength, despite persecution, of the

Louis Fischer

liquidate the empire. Younger Tories follow in his footsteps. Clocks have been known to stand still or be turned back. One can love the past so much as to fear any future that does not resemble it; that hampers change and progress.

The United Nations went to war not to make a better world but to defend their territory and sovereignty. With the exception of France and England, all members of the United Nations entered the war after they were attacked. Their sympathies, in most cases, were anti-Axis; yet they waited until they were struck. It is fair to say that France declared war on Sunday afternoon, September 3, 1939, because she was afraid not to go when Britain had already done so. Only in Great Britain was there sufficient popular understanding of national and imperial interests to force the vacillating, none-too-anti-fascist government of Neville Chamberlain to enter the war before the Nazi blow actually fell on British soil and British men.

Long after the Axis powers had shown their true and ugly faces, the countries now in the United Nations group continued to aid fascism passively and actively. It may therefore be somewhat unreasonable to expect the anti-Axis belligerents to follow a Better World policy. It may be unreasonable to criticise them for their wish to preserve or restore the past. The criticism, in my case, is born of the hope that our victory can be captured by men of new will and hitched to the star of a better world in which internationalism, democracy, and decency can bring peace and prosperity to two billion human beings. The hope is legitimate, for the defeat of fascism could open the door to a new life. But there will be no new life unless those who want it work energetically and incessantly for it, as energetically and incessantly as the defenders of the *status quo* work to keep their old, rotten world.

